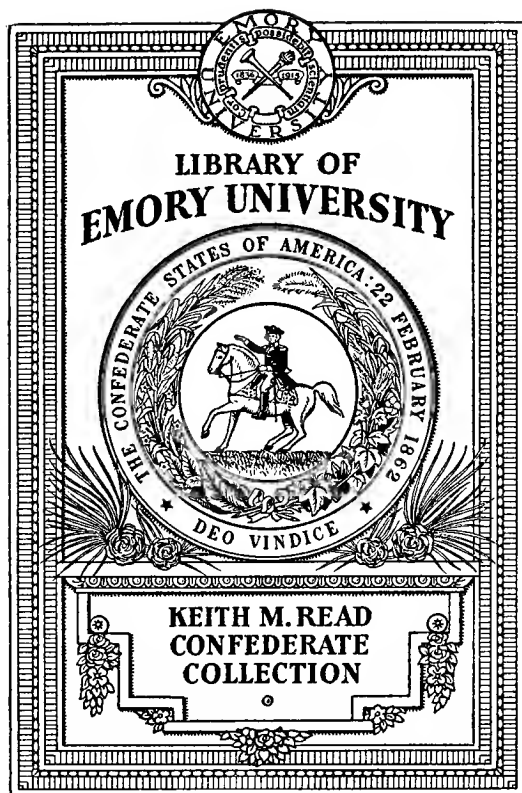


PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
BIBLE CONVENTION
OF THE
CONFEDERATE STATES OF AMERICA,
INCLUDING THE MINUTES
OF THE
ORGANIZATION OF THE BIBLE SOCIETY,
AUGUSTA, GA., MARCH 19th--21st, 1862 ;
AND ALSO A
SERMON PREACHED BEFORE THE CONVENTION

BY THE
REV. GEORGE F. PIERCE, D. D.,
Bishop of the M. E. Church, South.

AUGUSTA, GA:
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INTRODUCTORY HISTORICAL SKETCH.

THE Board of Managers of the Bible Society of the Confederate States, deem it proper to prefix to the Report of the proceedings of the Convention which established said Society, a brief history of the movements that preceded its organization.

Until a very recent date, the American Bible Society had the entire confidence of the South, and found here many of its most liberal supporters. It was not until some time after the dissolution of the Union, that any steps were taken toward a separate organization. The Bible Society of Charleston, an Institution founded in 1810, declared in its report at the semi-centennial anniversary meeting, 21st January, 1861, its desire still to labor in concert with that Society, in the following language :

"In relation to the American Bible Society, and in renewing our arrangement* with it respecting the agency of the Rev. Mr. Bolles, (which has existed about eight years,) we are not unmindful of the change in the civil relations of the North and the South, which threatens the harmony of action which ought to characterise the associations of Christian men for Christian ends. We are not unmindful of the fact that the Legislature of the State of New York have, by a nearly unanimous vote of both houses, offered the Government at Washington men and money without limitation, for the coercion of the South, thus promoting a disposition to subordinate right to power, and reason to force; and in the face of proffered negotiations, before communities pledged both by Christian and civil obligations to regard each other's welfare, invoking war in its worst form.

"We are not unmindful that the American Bible Society, from its location in the city of New York, and its concentration of large means, does, in fact, foster the industry and prosperity of a people whose rulers are thus inconsiderate of the just claims and the grievous wrongs of the South.

"Notwithstanding these facts, we are unwilling to break up arrangements that appeal to higher than earthly motives, and tend to promote the highest and purest earthly purposes. We remember with satisfaction that, in the progress of the slavery agitation, the American Bible Society and its Board of Managers have resisted every attempt to implicate its management in the difficulties incident to the controversy; and we believe that our people, in assuming a position deemed necessary to our civil rights and to our social duties, would not willingly be deprived of their accustomed opportunities of bearing their part in promoting the common good of our fellow-men.

* By this arrangement, Rev. Mr. B., Agent of the American Bible Society, served the Bible Society of Charleston, within Charleston District, three months of the year, receiving a part of his salary from the latter Society.

"For these reasons, the Board encourage the hope that good ends may be subserved by the renewal of our former arrangements; and that the principles that have governed, and, as we trust, will continue to govern, the American Bible Society, will have a tendency to allay and counteract the influence of those who would breathe the spirit of conflict instead of the spirit of peace."

But the hope here expressed was destroyed when the United States Government engaged in an unholy crusade against all that the Southern people hold sacred. In no long time, it was found that we were even denied the privilege of importing the word of God, bought at the Bible House. The South had no option, but to look to her own resources for the Book of Life.

At a subsequent meeting of the Board of Managers of the Charleston Bible Society, 17th June, 1861, a preamble and resolutions were adopted, from which the following passages are extracted:

"Our last annual report, made less than six months ago, in communicating to the Society the renewal for another year of the arrangements between the American Bible Society and our own, in respect to the services of Mr. Bolles, adverted to the change in the civil relations of the North and the South, then in progress, and threatening the harmony that ought to characterise the action of associations for Christian ends. We expressed ourselves as not unmindful of the manifestations of unfriendliness to the rights and feelings of the South; but unwilling to break up arrangements suggested by motives of high sanction, and designed to promote purposes universally approved. We hoped that good ends might be subserved by a continuance of our relations with the American Bible Society, especially as its management had avoided all implication with controversies respecting the institutions of the South. We do not now know of any act that would indicate a change of their policy. But events have risen above all ordinary influences. The whole aspect of things is altered. Opinions and acts, public and personal, have been assuming darker and darker shades; and now the entire North is arrayed in hostility against the Confederate States.

"This civil separation involves naturally and properly a separate and independent position in our religious and charitable establishments. In the opinion of the Committee, therefore, the relation we have held to the American Bible Society is annulled by the war; and we are to seek by new arrangements to obtain the facilities which have heretofore been afforded through the agency of that Society.

"In the course proper to the occasion, the other Bible Societies of the State are equally concerned with us. They will, probably, dissolve, or consider dissolved, their connection with the American Bible Society, as auxiliaries. The measures necessary to secure a supply of Bibles and Testaments ought to be common to us all.

"In conformity with the conclusions and purposes thus briefly set forth, the Committee respectfully recommend to the consideration of the Board, the following resolutions, viz:

1. "RESOLVED, That this Board considers all resolutions and acts, making the Bible Society of Charleston auxiliary to the American Bible Society, annulled by the change in the civil relations of the States in which the said Societies are located.

"2. RESOLVED, That this Board is ready to confer with other bodies in this State, and in the Confederate States, for organizing a general Southern Bible Society, in order to secure the important ends usually effected through general institutions of this class.

"3. RESOLVED, That the above or some other plan for united or common action, respecting an adequate and regular Bible supply, be commended to the attention of all our Societies as a proper subject for consideration by the Convention at Orangeburgh, to meet on the 24th day of September next."

A circular from N. R. Middleton, L.L.D., President of the Bible Society of Charleston, setting forth the action of its Board, was sent to the other Societies of the State, and the measures it advised met with general and hearty approval.

We know of no action taken up to this time by State or auxiliary Societies already organized in any of the other States; but on the 17th of July, 1861, the Bible Society of Augusta, Ga., an organization that had long been an active and efficient auxiliary of the A. B. S., recommended a State Convention in Georgia, for the purpose of forming a State Society, to take measures for supplying the people with the Bible, and to consider the subject of the formation of a general Bible Society. This Convention was invited to meet in Macon, Ga., 22d October: and about the same time the Rowan Bible Society, N. C., made a similar call for a State Bible Convention in North Carolina, to meet in Greensborough, N. C., 23d October. And on the day above mentioned, 17th July, 1861, a meeting of the friends of the Bible was held in Nashville, Tenn., and a Bible Convention for that State called, to meet on 8th August. That Convention was held, a State Society organized, and arrangements made for issuing immediately an edition of the New Testament alone, and of the New Testament and Psalms. The work was executed—an agate 32mo.—at the Methodist Publishing House in Nashville, under the editorial supervision of Rev. Thomas O. Summers, D.D., he using as a standard the "revised brevier duodecimo, (1858,) edition of the American Bible Society."

Thus it will be seen, that by a spontaneous movement in different States, the friends of the Bible cause took action for the supply and circulation of the word of God to the people, in the firm belief that our separation from the North was final, although we were even then pressed on every side by a foe resolved upon our subjugation.

In South Carolina, for three or four years previously, there had been an annual Convention of the Bible Societies of that State. This body met this year by previous appointment, in Orangeburg, 24th and 25th September. We quote a portion of the preamble and resolutions adopted at this meeting, which, acting on the suggestion of the Managers of the Charleston Society, took the initiatory steps toward calling a *general* Bible Convention:

"There are, however, circumstances of an extraordinary nature, which have arisen since the meeting of the last Convention, deeply affecting the interests of this great cause, in common with every other interest of society, which demand the serious consideration of this Convention, that such action shall be taken as shall not only preserve this blessed work from interruption and injury, but secure advantages for its prosecution in the future with greater efficiency and success than have ever yet been attained.

"The separation of these Confederate States from the late American Union, and the establishment of a separate and independent Government of their own, together with the causes, political and social, which in their sovereign view rendered such separation essential to the preservation of their rights and liberties, would have, of itself, unquestionably involved the ultimate termination of the auxiliary relationship between the Bible Societies in these States and the American Bible Society, located in the city of New York. When, to the fact of this political separation, involving the continuance of our former relations to the American Bible Society only under circumstances of great inconvenience and detriment, is added the fact that an unjust and aggressive and most cruel war has been commenced upon us by the United States, and is persisted in without regard to our expressed desire for peace, and with the avowed purpose of subjecting us again to that Government; a war, waged with every circumstance of the bitterest hostility, blockading our ports, cutting off all facilities for transportation, and thus putting it out of the power of the American Bible Society, even if the disposition existed, to fill orders for Bibles and Testaments from Societies in the South; that which was before a question to be carefully considered previous to final action, becomes a paramount duty, an absolute and most pressing necessity; and, in the judgment of your Committee, immediate steps should be taken to secure the organization of a General Bible Society for these Confederate States, which shall become for us all that the American Bible Society was for the late American Union, an inexhaustible source of home supply and a common Agent for the prosecution of our work in foreign lands.

"The Committee submit the following resolutions:

"RESOLVED, That in the opinion of this Convention, the organization of a BIBLE SOCIETY, of the Confederate States of America, for the circulation of the Holy Scriptures, without note or comment, in our own and in foreign lands, is imperatively demanded; and should be secured at the earliest practicable moment.

"RESOLVED, That with a view of securing a general expression of opinion from the Bible Societies and friends of this cause in the other States of the Confederacy, and thus, with their co-operation, securing the organization contemplated in the previous resolution, Delegates from State Conventions or Societies of other States be invited to meet Delegates to be appointed by this Convention, in a General Convention, to be held in Georgia, at Augusta, on the third Wednesday of March, 1862; to which shall be committed the duty of effecting the organization of a Bible Society for these Confederate States, including all questions of Constitution and Policy, with the single exception embodied in the first resolution, viz., that the editions to be circulated shall be without note or comment, and of the version in common use.

"RESOLVED, That three members of this Convention be appointed Delegates to the Bible Convention of the State of North Carolina, and three members, Delegates to the Bible Convention of the State of Georgia, soon to be held in these States respectively, to represent before those bodies the action of this Convention, and to solicit their co-operation in the formation of a General Bible Society, on the basis set forth in the first and second of this series of resolutions.

"RESOLVED, That the President of this Convention be authorised to address a letter to the Bible Societies of the States which have not called Conventions, soliciting their co-operation also with this Convention in this work, by sending Delegates to the General Convention above recommended."

The President of this Convention, Daniel Ravenel, Esq., in accordance with these resolutions, issued nearly three hundred circulars to all sections of the Confederacy, extending the call for this General Convention, and gave a wider publicity to the call by procuring its insertion in several newspapers. In North Carolina and Georgia, the State Conventions already summoned, met, and one was afterwards called in Florida, all of which concurring in the action of the South Carolina Convention, appointed Delegates to the General Convention. A committee was appointed to select Delegates representing the Tennessee Bible Society; but because of the occupation of Nashville by the Federal army before they had been named, and the dispersion of the members of the Board and Committee, the appointment was not made; though the Convention, aware of these circumstances, recognised as Delegates and received with a cordial welcome three gentlemen present from that State.

The records of the General Convention will add to this brief sketch whatever else is necessary to be known of the history of that body which inaugurated "The Bible Society of the Confederate States of America"—a Society which, we trust, is to endure for ages, and to prove a source of blessing to millions of the human race.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE CONVENTION.

The Bible Convention of the Confederate States met, according to appointment, in St. John's Methodist Episcopal Church, Augusta, Ga., at 11 o'clock, a. m., March 19th, 1862, and after religious exercises, embracing a prayer offered by the Rev. David Wills, and a sermon preached from Deut., viii., 3, by the Rev. Bishop George F. Pierce, D.D., Rev. Mr. Bolles called the Delegates to order, and on his nomination, Col. J. M. Chambers was chosen temporary Chairman, and J. Y. Mills, Secretary.

After some remarks by the Chairman, the Convention united in prayer, led by the Rev. Dr. Winkler.

The following resolutions of the Bible Convention of South Carolina were read, being in reference to the subject of forming a Bible Society of the Confederate States, viz :

"1. RESOLVED, That in the opinion of this Convention, the organization of a Bible Society of the Confederate States of America, for the circulation of the Holy Scriptures without note or comment in our own and in foreign lands, is imperatively demanded, and should be secured at the earliest practicable moment.

"2. RESOLVED, That with the view of securing a general expression of opinion from the Bible Societies and friends of this cause in the other States of the Confederacy, and thus, with their co-operation, securing the organization contemplated in the previous resolution, Delegates from State Conventions or Societies of other States be invited to meet Delegates to be appointed by this Convention in a general Convention to be held in Georgia, at Augusta, on the third Wednesday of March, 1862; to which shall be committed the duty of effecting the organization of a Bible Society for these Confederate States, including all questions of constitution and policy, with the single exception embodied in the first resolution, viz : that the editions to be circulated shall be without note or comment, and of the version in common use."

After some discussion on the subject of a permanent organization, it was ordered to call the roll of delegates by States.

The following delegates were reported to be present, viz :

South Carolina—Daniel Ravenel, Thomas H. Carlisle, J. Y. Mills, Rev. A. G. Stacy, Thomas C. Perrin, Robert Bryce, S. R. Chandler, Rev. A. F. Dickson, Rev. E. A. Bolles, Rev. Dr. E. T. Winkler, J. A. Shirer, Rev. Dr. E. H. Myers, Rev. C. P. Gadsden, Henry D. Lesesne, Samuel J. Wagner, Rev. C. V. Barnes.

Georgia—Rev. David Wills, Rev. Bishop G. F. Pierce, Rev. G. G. N. MacDonell, Rev. Dr. S. S. Davis, Rev. Dr. J. R. Wilson, Rev. Dr.

A. T. Mann, Rev. W. H. Potter, James Camak, M.D., Rev. Joseph S. Key, Rev. L. M. Carter, Rev. Dr. A. A. Lipscomb, Rev. Dr. Lovick Pierce, J. M. Chambers, J. A. Ansley, W. C. Derry, Rev. Wm. J. Parks, Rev. Dr. Alexander Means, Rev. A. E. Marshall, Rev. J. W. Reid, Rev. J. O. A. Clark, Rev. J. W. Burke, Rev. F. M. Haygood, G. B. Haygood, W. H. Turpin, Rev. Dr. N. Hoyt, Rev. J. E. Evans, W. L. Mitchell, J. S. Hamilton, Rev. W. J. Hard, Rev. J. H. Campbell, Rev. S. C. Gaulden, Rev. S. J. Pinkerton.

Virginia—Rev. George Woodbridge, D.D.

North Carolina—W. C. Means, Rev. J. Rumple, Rev. H. B. Cunningham, D.D.

Alabama.—E. A. Holt, Rev. Dr. W. J. Sasnett.

Florida—Rev. Josephus Anderson.

Tennessee—Rev. W. C. Johnson.

Rev. W. J. Hard nominated Daniel Ravenel, Esq., as permanent President of the Convention, and, on motion, he was elected by acclamation.

The President, on taking the chair, made some appropriate and suggestive remarks.

The Rev. Dr. Myers nominated Rev. W. C. Johnson and Rev. A. F. Dickson as permanent Secretaries of the Convention, and J. Y. Mills and Rev. J. W. Burke, as assistant Secretaries; and, on motion, they were elected.

Rev. George Woodbridge, D.D., and Rev. J. Rumple, were nominated and elected Vice-Presidents.

On motion, the hours for sessions of the Convention were fixed at 9 o'clock, a. m., 3 1-2 o'clock, p. m., and 7 1-2 o'clock, p. m.

On motion, an invitation was extended to representatives of the Press to report the proceedings of the Convention.

The Convention, on motion, took a recess until 3 1-2 o'clock, p. m.

WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON, 3 1-2 O'CLOCK.

The Convention, after recess, met at the appointed hour—the President in the chair—and was opened with prayer by the Rev. Dr. Wilson.

The following resolution offered by the Hon. Mr. Perrin, was adopted, viz :

“RESOLVED, That a Committee consisting of two from each Denomination of Christians represented in this Convention, be appointed to prepare business for the Convention, to whom all motions in reference thereto shall be committed; except that the selection of a centre of business for the operations of this Convention shall be referred to a Committee of one from each State represented in this Convention.”

The President appointed the following gentlemen as members of the Business Committee, viz :

W. L. Mitchell and Rev. Dr. Howe, of the Presbyterian Church.

Rev. Bishop Pierce and Rev. W. C. Johnson, Methodist E. Church.

Rev. C. P. Gadsden and Rev. Dr. Woodbridge, Protestant Episcopal Church.

Rev. Dr. Winkler and J. H. Hamilton, Baptist Church.

Rev. E. A. Bolles and W. C. Means, Lutheran Church.

Rev. Dr. Lipscomb, Methodist Protestant Church.

J. Young Mills, Associate Reformed Church.

On motion of Rev. Dr. Winkler, the name of the President of the Convention for the French Huguenot Church, was added to the Committee.

The President appointed the following gentlemen as members of the Committee on the selection of a centre of business for the operations of the Convention, viz :

J. M. Chambers, Ga., Rev. J. Rumple, N. C., Henry D. Lesesne, S. C., Rev. W. C. Johnson, Tenn., Rev. Dr. Sasnett, Ala., Rev. Josephus Anderson, Florida, Rev. Dr. Woodbridge, Va.

Pending the consideration of the above resolution, the Rev. Dr. George Howe and Simpson Bobo, Esq., appeared and took their seats as delegates from South Carolina.

The following preamble and resolution, offered by the Rev. Mr. Rumple, was adopted, viz :

"Inasmuch as our country is engaged in a war with the United States in defence of our homes, our altars and all our dearest rights; and inasmuch as God has invited us to pray to Him in times of trouble, promising His help, and his Convention desires to record its faith in the power of prayer; therefore be it
 "RESOLVED, That this Convention will spend the first half hour of its morning sessions in prayer to God in behalf of our struggling country."

A communication from Rev. W. C. Johnson, Corresponding Secretary and General Agent of the Tennessee Bible Society was presented, and having been read, was on motion referred to the Business Committee.

It was, on motion, resolved that when the Convention adjourns, it adjourn to meet to-morrow morning at 9 o'clock; and on motion the Convention adjourned.

THURSDAY MORNING, MARCH 20TH, 1862.

The Convention met according to adjournment, the President in the chair--and was opened with a prayer-meeting in behalf of our country, conducted by Vice-President Rumple.

The minutes of yesterday's sessions were read, and having been amended, were approved.

The following gentlemen appeared and took their seats as delegates, viz: A. A. Gilbert and John A. Inglis, of S. C., Rev. Edward P. Palmer, Ga., Dr. E. Nye Hutchinson, N. C., Rev. George A. Caldwell, Tenn., P. M. Ozanne and Rev. R. McInnis, La.

Dr. Hutchinson explained that his failure to arrive at an earlier date was on account of sickness.

A. A. Gilbert was, on motion, invited to take a seat as one of the Secretaries of the Convention.

A communication from the Secretary of the Gainesville Bible Society having been read, was, on motion, received.

The following resolutions offered by the Rev. Dr. Hoyt, were unanimously adopted, viz:

"RESOLVED, 1. That the thanks of this Convention be tendered to the Rev. Bishop Pierce, for his excellent, appropriate sermon, delivered at the opening of the session of this body, and that he be most respectfully requested to furnish a copy for publication.

"RESOLVED, 2. That a special committee be appointed to devise ways and means for furnishing and extensively circulating said sermon among the people of these Confederate States."

The Business Committee, through the Secretary of the Committee, submitted its report, which, on motion, was received.

The resolution therein respecting a Bible mass meeting this evening in St. John's Church was, on motion, taken up and adopted.

The Rev. Mr. Clark was, on motion, appointed to give public notice of the Bible mass meeting, and the Rev. Mr. Gadsden and the Rev. Drs. Winkler and Lipscomb were appointed to make addresses on the occasion.

P. M. Ozanne stated that the delegates from the South Western Bible Society had been unavoidably detained, and now they desired to be heard in reference to matters connected with the organization of a Bible Society for the Confederate States.

Whereupon, on motion of the Rev. Mr. Dickson, it was

"RESOLVED, That so much of the report of the Committee to prepare business as has not been acted upon, be re-committed to the Committee, with the request that the delegates from the South Western Bible Society meet and confer with them."

The name of the Rev. Mr. McInnis, of La., was, on motion, added to the Committee on the selection of a centre of business.

These Committees thereupon withdrew.

The Rev. Dr. W. T. Brantly and W. C. Derry, of Ga., appeared and took their seats as delegates in the Convention.

The President announced the Committee to provide the ways and means for publishing the sermon of the Rev. Bishop Pierce, and to superintend the work, viz : Rev. J. O. A. Clark, J. A. Ansley.

Pending the return of the absent Committees, the Convention took a recess until 3 1-2 o'clock, p. m.

THURSDAY AFTERNOON, 3 1-2 o'clock.

The Convention, after recess, met at the appointed hour, the President in the chair, and was opened with prayer by Rev. Dr. Davis.

A communication was read by the President from the Secretary of the Gaston county Bible Society, N. C., and, on motion, was received.

The Business Committee again submitted their report through their Chairman, who stated that the Committee had resolved to make no change in the report, with the understanding that the delegates from the South Western Bible Society should submit their views directly to the Convention. The report was, on motion, received with this understanding.

The following resolution, offered by the Rev. Dr. Myers, was, after some discussion, adopted, viz :

"RESOLVED, That the vote of the Convention be, PER CAPITA, on the Constitution, unless the delegation from some State call for a vote by States on any article, and then the vote shall be by States, each State to cast one vote."

It was, on motion, resolved that the Constitution reported by the Business Committee be taken up article by article.

Article 1st was read and adopted.

Article 2d was read and discussed, pending which the Convention, on motion, took a recess until 7 1-2 o'clock, p. m.

THURSDAY EVENING, MARCH 20TH, 1862.

The Convention, after recess, met at the appointed hour, the President in the chair, and was opened with religious exercises conducted by the Rev. Dr. Pierce.

Able and impressive addresses were made before the Convention and the friends of the Bible cause, by the Rev. Mr. Gadsden, the Rev. Dr. Winkler, and the Rev. Dr. Lipscomb.

The benediction was pronounced by the Rev. Mr. Evans, and the Convention adjourned.

FRIDAY MORNING, MARCH 21ST, 1862.

The Convention met according to adjournment, the President in the chair, and was opened with a prayer meeting in behalf of the country, conducted by the Rev. Mr. Haygood.

The minutes of yesterday's sessions were read and approved.

W. H. Thomas, agent of the Memphis and Shelby county Bible Society, appeared and took his seat as a delegate in the Convention.

The Rev. Dr. Winkler read a communication from Rev. W. D. Rice, General Superintendent of the Baptist Colportage Board, S. C., requesting that he would represent the Board in the Convention.

The committee on the publication of the Introductory Sermon of the Rev. Bishop Pierce submitted a report, stating that Bishop Pierce had promised to furnish a copy of the sermon at an early date, and presenting a mode of publication, and, on motion, the report was adopted.

The following resolution offered by Rev. Mr. Staey was unanimously adopted, viz :

"RESOLVED, That the thanks of this Convention are due and are hereby tendered to Rev. C. P. Gadsden, Rev. Dr. E. T. Winkler, and Dr. A. A. Lipscomb, for their excellent and eloquent addresses delivered on last evening."

The consideration of the report of the Business Committee was, on motion, resumed.

Article 2d of the Constitution was taken up, and a substitute was offered by P. M. Ozanne, which having been amended, was adopted. Pending the discussion on this article, the Convention joined in prayer, led by Rev. Dr. Woodbridge.

Article 3d was taken up, and on motion of the Rev. Dr. Myers, the remainder of the Constitution reported by the Business Committee was stricken out, and the remainder of a plan submitted for a Constitution, by P. M. Ozanne, was taken up in lieu thereof.

Article 3d of said plan was taken up, and having been amended, was adopted.

The Convention, on motion, took a recess until 3 1-2 o'clock.

FRIDAY AFTERNOON, MARCH 21ST, 1862.

The Convention, after recess, met at the appointed hour, the President in the Chair, and was opened with prayer, led by the Rev. Dr. Howe.

The Convention resumed the consideration of the plan for a Constitution.

Article 5th was taken up, and the blank having been filled, was adopted.

Article 4th was taken up, and having been amended, was adopted.

Articles 6th, 7th and 8th, were taken up and adopted.

Article 9th was taken up, and having been amended, was adopted.

Article 10th was taken up and adopted.

The Constitution as a whole was taken up, and pending its consideration, the Convention took a recess until 7 1-2 o'clock.

FRIDAY EVENING, MARCH 21st, 1862.

The Convention, after recess, met at the appointed hour—the President in the Chair—and was opened with prayer, led by the Rev. Dr. Cunningham.

The Consideration of the Constitution as a whole was resumed, and Article 6th having been re-considered and amended, the CONSTITUTION as a whole, was adopted, and is as follows:

CONSTITUTION.

SECTION I—NAME.

This Society shall be known by the name of the BIBLE SOCIETY OF THE CONFEDERATE STATES OF AMERICA.

SECTION II—OBJECTS.

The objects of this Society shall be classified under two departments, viz: the publishing and the distributing departments, the financial workings of which shall be kept distinct and forever separate.

The framing of the laws which are to govern the Society in its distributions is left for a more auspicious season.

The objects of the Society, as to the former department, shall be to encourage the circulation of the Holy Scriptures, without note or comment, by the printing, publishing, or procuring of the same. The only copies in the English language to be circulated by the Society shall be in accordance with the text now published by the British and Foreign Bible Society.

Further, the Society shall not be debarred from undertaking or aiding in new translations of the Scriptures into Foreign languages.

The only copies to be circulated in other tongues shall be such versions as shall receive the unanimous approval of the Committee on Versions, said Committee to consist of one from each of the denominations sustaining the Society; *Provided*, that, until said Committee on Versions shall adopt the needed versions in Foreign tongues, the Society shall circulate those versions issued by the British and Foreign Bible Society.

SECTION III—MEMBERSHIP.

Members of the Society shall be as follows: *Annual Members*—being persons who shall annually contribute a sum not less than five dollars. *Life Members*—being persons who shall have given the sum of thirty dollars in one payment. *Life Directors*—being persons who shall have given the sum of one hundred and fifty dollars. *Honorary Directors*—being ministers of the Gospel whose congregations shall make an annual contribution in aid of the funds of the Society. *Patrons*—being persons who shall have given the sum of one thousand dollars.

SECTION IV—OFFICERS.

The officers of the Society shall consist of a President, Vice-Presidents, and a Board of Managers composed of twenty-four members of the Society, seven of whom shall constitute a quorum.

The Vice-Presidents shall be the presiding officers of, or be appointed by, the State Societies, Associations or Conventions. In a failure to appoint, from whatever cause, the Board of Managers shall make the appointment.

The President and Vice-Presidents, Life and Honorary Directors, and Patrons, shall be entitled to attend all meetings of the Board of Managers, and have a deliberative voice therein.

SECTION V—MANAGERS.

To the Board of Managers shall be committed all the business affairs of the Society, subject to the instructions of the Society, as expressed in its By-Laws.

They shall elect one of their number to be Chairman. They shall also elect such subordinate officers as may be deemed necessary. They shall have power to fill vacancies, occurring in their body.

They shall hold monthly meetings, and shall report annually to the Society the operations, condition and prospects thereof.

SECTION VI—ELECTIONS.

The officers of the Society shall be elected by ballot; the President, annually; the Managers to serve for two years; *Provided*, however, one-half of the Board first elected, to be determined by lot, shall serve for one year.

SECTION VII—ANNUAL MEETING.

There shall be an annual meeting of the Society, when the election of officers shall take place, the report of the Board of Managers be presented, and the affairs of the Society transacted. The time and place of the meeting shall be decided upon by the Society at its previous meeting.

SECTION VIII—CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETIES.

All Bible Societies in the Confederacy which shall express their wish to unite with this Society, and which shall agree to make an annual appropriation in aid of its funds, shall be received as co-operative Societies, and be entitled to the privileges thereof.

Bible Societies, Associations or Conventions, organized for a whole State, and which shall hold a Bible House or Depository of the Scriptures for the use of all Bible Societies in their State, shall be classed as State Associations. All other Societies shall be classed as Branch Associations.

SECTION IX—BY-LAWS.

The Society shall be empowered, at the annual meeting, to make By-laws for its government, not inconsistent with its Constitution.

SECTION X—AMENDMENTS.

No amendment shall be made to this Constitution, unless the same shall receive the votes of three-fourths of the members present at an

annual meeting ; and such amendment must have been submitted and seconded at the previous annual meeting.

The Committee on the selection of a centre of business for the operations of the Convention, submitted their report, which having been read and discussed, was adopted, and is as follows :

The Committee on the selection of the centre of business, respectfully report, that the result of their deliberations is embodied in the following resolutions, which they recommend to the consideration of the Convention :

1. That the place of business of the Bible Society of the Confederate States shall be temporarily the City of Augusta, Georgia.
2. That when the condition of the country shall be sufficiently settled to warrant the selection of a permanent place of business for the Society, the President of the Society shall call a Convention of the State and other Bible Societies at some central point, which may be held at an annual meeting ; and that Convention shall determine the permanent place of business for the Bible Society of the Confederate States.
3. That the basis of representation for the several States shall be according to the representation of the several States in the lower branch of the Congress of the Confederate States, and the Delegates present shall cast the whole vote of their States.

The following resolution was adopted and referred to the Board of Managers, viz :

RESOLVED, That it is the sense of this Convention, that the Bible Society of the Confederate States should, without delay, apply to Congress for such legislation as will transfer to the said Bible Society, to be by it administered for the purposes to which they were devoted, all property and funds within the limits of the Confederate States, belonging to the American Bible Society, and liable as such to sequestration.

Vice-President Woodbridge in the Chair.

The following resolutions of thanks were adopted, viz :

RESOLVED, That this Convention tender to the Pastor of this Church and the good people of Augusta, their sincere thanks for the special kindness they have shown to us since we have been here ; and we pray that God may bless them, and that their children may carry on the great Bible Cause when we shall be silently sleeping in the grave.

RESOLVED, That the thanks of this Convention be tendered to the President for the able and courteous manner in which he has discharged his office.

RESOLVED, That the thanks of this Convention be tendered to the Secretaries for the faithful discharge of their duties.

RESOLVED, That the thanks of this Convention are hereby tendered to all the Rail-road Companies passing the Delegates to and from Augusta for one fare.

The following resolution was adopted, viz :

RESOLVED, That each member of the Convention sign his name to a copy of the Constitution, to be preserved by the Board of Managers.

The minutes of the day's sessions were read and approved.

Thereupon the Convention joined in singing the stanzas of the hymn—

"Blessed be the tie that binds
Our hearts in Christian love"—

and in prayer, led by the Rev. Dr. Woodbridge.

The Convention then adjourned, *sine die*.

DANIEL RAVENEL,
President of the Convention.

W. C. JOHNSON, }
A. F. DICKSON, } *Secretaries.*

ORGANIZATION

OF THE

CONFEDERATE STATES BIBLE SOCIETY.

AUGUSTA, GA., March 21, 1862.

The members of the Convention having complied with the provisions of the Constitution in regard to the several grades of membership, (many constituting themselves life members,) the Bible Society of the Confederate States was temporarily organized by calling Daniel Ravenel, Esq., to the Chair. The Rev. J. W. Burke was elected Secretary.

On motion, a list of those who had constituted themselves members, life directors, &c., was read by Rev. E. A. Bolles, when it appeared that about forty-five persons had enrolled their names, contributing over nine hundred dollars to the Society.

On motion, it was

RESOLVED, That the Constitution framed by the Bible Convention of the Confederate States, be adopted as the fundamental law of this Society.

On motion of Mr. Ozanne, of La., it was

RESOLVED, That a Committee of one from each State be appointed by the Chair to nominate persons to be voted for as permanent officers of this Society.

The Chair appointed the following Committee; James M. Chambers, Ga.; Rev. George Woodbridge, D.D. Va.; Rev. Josephus Anderson, Fla.; P. M. Ozanne, La.; Rev. W. C. Johnson, Tenn.; Hon. H. D. Lesesne, S. C.; Rev. H. B. Cunningham, D.D., N. C.; Rev. W. J. Sasnett, D.D., Ala.

The Committee, after having retired for consultation, gave the names of Hon. C. G. Memminger, of S. C., and Hon. J. H. Lumpkin, of Ga., as proper persons to receive the suffrages of the Society for President, together with the number of names to comprise the Board of Managers.

An election was held by ballot, which resulted in the choice of the following officers.

President—HON. JOSEPH HENRY LUMPKIN, of Ga.

Managers—Rev. S. S. Davis, D.D., Rev. J. R. Wilson, D.D., George M. Thew, Wm. A. Walton, Dr. I. P. Garvin, Rev. E. H.

Myers, D.D., William C. Derry, Rev. A. T. Mann, D.D., Rev. A. J. Huntingdon, David R. Wright, Rev. William J. Hard, D. B. Plumb, Dr. L. D. Ford, Dr. J. Milligan, Rev. William H. Clarke, W. P. Carmichael, W. L. Mitchell, and James M. Chambers, of Georgia; E. L. Kerrison, and John A. Inglis, of South Carolina; R. A. Baker, of Ala.; W. C. Means, of North Carolina; Rev. George Woodbridge, D.D., of Va.; James E. Broome, of Fla.

On motion of Rev. Dr. Winkler,

RESOLVED, That the Society proceed to determine who are Vice-Presidents under the Constitution.

They are as follows: Daniel Ravenel, S. C.; Rev. David Wills, Ga.; E. A. Holt, Ala.; Rev. Josephus Anderson, Fla.; Rev. Philip Courteney, Va.; Hon. Nathan Green, Tenn.; Rev. N. H. D. Wilson, N. C.

On motion, it was

RESOLVED, That the Board of Managers be empowered to add the names of the Vice-Presidents from the other States, in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution, when they shall have received the necessary information from State Societies and Conventions.

RESOLVED, That the Secretary be instructed to notify Hon. J. H. Lumpkin of his election, and request his acceptance of the Presidency of the Society.

Mr. Ozanne submitted a system of By-Laws for the temporary government of the Board of Managers, as follows:

BY-LAWS.

I.

At the annual meeting of the Society, the President, or in his absence the Vice-President then present, and next in seniority of office, or in the absence of all Vice-Presidents, any such member as shall be appointed for that purpose, shall preside.

II.

The Recording Secretary of the Board of Managers shall be the Secretary of the Society, and shall keep a record of its proceedings.

III.

All sales of the Scriptures shall be for Cash.

IV.

The property of the Society shall be fully insured.

V.

The Society shall devote its immediate energetic efforts to obtaining a supply of Testaments suitable for our volunteers, our children, and our schools.

On motion,

RESOLVED, That the Board of Managers frame a body of By-Laws, giving the leading principles which should guide their course; and submit the same at the next annual meeting for the action of the Society. In the meanwhile they shall act to the best of their judgment.

On motion, it was

RESOLVED, That the next annual meeting of the Society be held in the city of Augusta, on the fourth Wednesday in April, 1863.

The meeting was closed with prayer by Rev. Dr. Wilson.

DANIEL RAVENEL, *President.*

J. W. BURKE, *Secretary.*

MEETING OF THE BOARD OF MANAGERS FOR ORGANIZATION.

The Board of Managers of the Bible Society of the Confederate States of America met at 9 1-2 o'clock, a. m., in the Lecture Room of the Presbyterian Church, Augusta, Ga., 22d March, 1862, Rev. Dr. Wilson in the Chair. Col. J. M. Chambers, of Augusta, Ga., prayed. The members present were, Rev. J. R. Wilson, D.D., Rev. Dr. Davis, Rev. Dr. Mann, Rev. Dr. Woodbridge, Rev. Dr. Myers, Rev. W. H. Clarke, Rev. W. J. Hard, Dr. J. Milligan, G. M. Thew, D. R. Wright, William A. Walton, William P. Carmichael, and J. M. Chambers.

The following permanent officers were elected: Rev. W. H. Clarke, Chairman; Rev. W. J. Hard, Recording Secretary; Rev. E. H. Myers, D.D., Corresponding Secretary; and G. M. Thew, Esq., Treasurer. Mr. Thomas, of Memphis, Tenn., upon invitation of the Board, made a statement in reference to stereotype plates of the New Testament, the property of the State Bible Society of Tennessee, now in Nashville, Tenn.

A letter from the State Bible Society of Tennessee, through Rev. W. C. Johnson, their agent, tendering to the Bible Society of the Confederate States of America, its stereotype plates of the New Testament, with the copies of the New Testament already published, was read.

Rev. Dr. Woodbridge, of Richmond, Va., offered the following resolutions, which were adopted:

RESOLVED, 1. That we cordially and gratefully accept the stereotype plates of the New Testament, together with the copies of the New Testament already printed, which the general Agent of the Tennessee Bible Society proposes to transfer, and that we will make any reasonable compensation therefor.

RESOLVED, 2. That we hereby appoint Mr. W. H. Thomas as our agent to procure said stereotype plates and Testaments, giving him full powers to act in the matter.

RESOLVED, 3. That in our perplexity we present this cause to Him, in whose hands are all hearts, that he will prosper the proposed mission, and that he will incline the hearts of our enemies to accede to our wishes.

Dr. Woodbridge led in prayer.

Mr. Ozanne, of New-Orleans, upon invitation, made some interesting suggestions in reference to the general workings of a Bible Board. He was afterwards requested to furnish the Corresponding Secretary with such documents as he may deem useful to us.

The thanks of the Board were tendered this gentleman.

William Walton, Esq., Hon. Charles J. Jenkins, and Hon. William T. Gould, were appointed a Committee to prepare an Act of Incorporation.

ration, and to procure a Charter for the Bible Society of the Confederate States of America.

The monthly meetings were appointed to be held on the first Friday afternoon of every month, at 5 o'clock, in the Presbyterian Lecture Room.

A Committee on Finance, consisting of G. M. Thew, Dr. Joseph Milligan and D. R. Wright, was appointed.

Rev. Drs. Myers, Wilson and Mann, were appointed to superintend the printing of the proceedings of the Convention, the Bible Society, and the action of the Board of Managers to this date.

The Treasurer was authorised to pay Mr. Thomas, upon the order of the Chairman, such sum as may be agreed on by the Financial Committee.

A Committee of three, consisting of Drs. Wilson, Mann and Myers, was appointed to prepare a code of By-Laws for the Board of Managers, and to report at their earliest convenience.

The Board adjourned.

W. H. CLARKE, *Chairman*.

WILLIAM J. HARD, *Sec'y*.

OFFICERS

OF THE

Bible Society of the Confederate States of America.

PRESIDENT.

HON. JOSEPH HENRY LUMPKIN, of Georgia.

VICE-PRESIDENTS.

DANIEL RAVENEL, So. Ca.	Rev. JOSEPHUS ANDERSON, Fla.
Rev. DAVID WILLS, Ga.	Rev. PHIL. COURTENEY, Va.
E. A. HOLT, Ala.	HON. NATHAN GREEN, Tenn.
Rev. N. H. D. WILSON, N. C.	

MANAGERS.

Rev. S. S. Davis, D.D., Rev. Joseph R. Wilson, D.D., Rev. E. H. Myers, D.D., Rev. A. T. Mann, D.D., Rev. A. J. Huntingdon, Rev. W. J. Hard, Rev. W. H. Clarke, George M. Thew, Wm. A. Walton, Dr. I. P. Garvin, W. C. Derry, D. R. Wright, Dr. L. D. Ford, Dr. J. Milligan, W. P. Carmichael, D. B. Plumb, W. L. Mitchell, and James M. Chambers, of Georgia; E. L. Kerrison and John A. Inglis, of South Carolina; R. A. Baker, of Alabama; W. C. Means, of North Carolina; Rev. George Woodbridge, D.D., of Virginia; James E. Broome, of Florida.

OFFICERS OF THE BOARD.

Rev. W. H. CLARKE, Chairman.
Rev. W. J. HARD, Recording Secretary.
Rev. E. H. MYERS, D.D., Corresponding Secretary.
GEORGE M. THEW, Treasurer.

TERMS OF MEMBERSHIP.

Members of the Society shall be as follows:

ANNUAL MEMBERS—Being persons who shall annually contribute a sum not less than five dollars.

LIFE MEMBERS—Being persons who shall have given the sum of thirty dollars in one payment.

LIFE DIRECTORS—Being persons who shall have given the sum of one hundred and fifty dollars.

HONORARY DIRECTORS—Being members of the Gospel, whose congregations shall make an annual contribution in aid of the funds of the Society.

PATRONS—Being persons who shall have given the sum of one thousand dollars.

 Contributions may be forwarded to GEORGE M. THEW, Esq., Treasurer, Augusta, Georgia.

THE WORD OF GOD A NATION'S LIFE.

A SERMON,

PREACHED BEFORE THE

BIBLE CONVENTION

OF THE

CONFEDERATE STATES.

AUGUSTA, GEORGIA, MARCH 19th, 1862.

By REV. GEORGE F. PIERCE, D.D.

Bishop of the Methodist E. Church.



AUGUSTA, GA:

PRINTED AT THE OFFICE OF THE CONSTITUTIONALIST.

1862.

AUGUSTA, MARCH 20TH, 1862.

BISHOP G. F. PIERCE, D.D.:

Dear Brother—The undersigned have been appointed a Committee by the Bible Convention, now in session in this City, "to ask a copy of your sermon, to superintend its publication, and to devise the ways and means for publishing the same." Believing that its circulation in our Confederate States will be productive of great good, and earnestly desiring an early compliance with the wishes of the Convention, we subscribe ourselves,

Your obedient servants,

J. O. A. CLARK, }
J. A. ANSLEY. } Com.

AUGUSTA, MARCH 20TH, 1862.

Messrs CLARK and ANSLEY:

Dear Brethren—Your note has been received, requesting a copy of my discourse before the Bible Convention for publication. I did not anticipate this call, and am not ready to furnish the manuscript, but will comply at an early day with the request of the Convention. Your expressed belief, that the publication will be "productive of great good," overcomes my reluctance to the labor of preparation. If the sermon shall contribute any thing in bringing the people to live by the Word of the Lord, I shall feel that I have not lived in vain.

Yours fraternally,

G. F. PIERCE.

A SERMON.

“That he might make thee know, that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live.”—
DEUTERONOMY, viii: 3.

“The things which were written aforetime, were written for our learning, that we, through patience and comfort of the Scriptures, might have hope.” The narratives of the old Testament are not to be regarded as simple paragraphs in general history—mere links connecting, in consecutive order, the events of the olden time, but as embodying great principles in human society and in the divine administration, vital alike to the well-being of the one and the uniformity of the other. God is always the same; and the Bible, while it records the actions of men, is really the history of God, and as “with Him there is neither variableness nor shadow of turning,” we learn from His past procedure what we may expect as to His present and future government. This fact being fully apprehended, we have a key to the dispensations of Providence, and need not greatly err in interpreting current events or in speculations as to the future. While in the Mosaic economy, there were many statutes, local and temporary, having their origin and use in what was peculiar to an introductory dispensation, yet among them are laws of universal and permanent obligation—principles ordained of God for all time, and perpetuated for the instruction of mankind, in the lasting records of the Church.

Government is an institution of Heaven: the powers that be are ordained of God. It is true, the Scriptures do not designate any particular form of government as best—nor are they eclectic as between the various theories which have challenged the suffrage of mankind; but as the condition precedent to the divine blessing, the duties of rulers and subjects are distinctly defined, and conformity to them urged by all that is precious in a nation’s hopes, and by all that is fearful in the just judgment of Almighty God. It is true, that many features of the Jewish polity were rudimental, introductory, and intended to teach the great lessons of dependence and obedience, as well as to meet for the time being the local necessities of tribes and families. Patriarchal supremacy, the subordinate authority of the chiefs of clans, and, under them, the heads of houses were all necess-

ary to local government, but were wholly inadequate for general purposes. Similarity of institutions was too feeble a bond of unity, and the elements of discord and disintegration were too strong to be neutralized by the perpetually diluting memories of a common descent and the traditional marvels of Egypt, the wilderness and the land of Canaan. Before their settlement in the Land of Promise, the children of Israel, however distinct as a people, were not a *nation* in the organic sense of that word; and their governmental condition was elementary, and the *forms* of authority were simple—yet sufficient for order and prompt action. While the law did not abrogate these institutions, and the theocracy to be inaugurated did not supercede them, God was all the time educating them to broader views of their destiny, and to more exalted conceptions of their spiritual relations, and of the high functions they were to perform as a chosen people among the nations of the earth.

The disciplinary process by which the Jews were conducted through their singular history from bondage to national independence, power and prosperity, looked to two grand objects—one of which has been largely overlooked in our perusal of the historic records of the Old Testament. One purpose, and the primary one, was to train up a people to a nationality, favorable in the plans of Providence for the introduction of Messiah's kingdom: the other and the collateral one, secondary in order, yet vastly important to mankind, was, that taking the *Jew* as the type of his race, God might develop the sources of weakness and danger—the probable points of departure from the true and the right way—the temptations most likely to corrupt and deteriorate—the elements of decay, overthrow and extinction. The Jews, with all their folly, ingratitude and perverseness, were fair specimens of human nature; and an impartial record of individual experience or national history, would show pride, unbelief, and forgetfulness of God in forms as revolting and under circumstances as provoking, as any furnished by Ephraim or Judah.

Moses, in the address of which the text is a part, exhorts the children of Israel to obey all the commandments of the Lord their God—reminds them of the way along which they had been led, of the afflictions which they had endured, and the deliverances wrought for them—interprets for them the programme of divine Providence, and declares the ulterior object to have been that they might know, that “man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live.”

The lowest construction which these words will bear—and doubtless the doctrine is true—is, that man's animal physical life is not sus-

tained by bread alone, but by any thing that God may appoint and sanctify for nutriment ; that His blessing first gave the earth its fertility and continues it, and if He were to command the air to sustain us, it would be equally obedient.

But the text has a higher meaning. It teaches that not only our being, but our well-being depends upon conformity to the divine word—that life, in its lowest gradation, as predicable of man, is not sustained by the natural law of adaptation of means to ends, and can neither be developed, prolonged nor made happy, outside of the will and word of the Lord—that bread, though ordained as the staff of life, does not nourish by virtue of its chemical properties, but by the blessing of the Lord—that the transgression of the divine law, by intemperance—excess in the use of what God supplies or allows—poisons, destroys, entails disease and death ; that life is to be regarded not as a physiological fact, but a moral endowment, deriving its dignity and value from its religious use, the moral appropriation of its powers, its spiritual relations, and its possible eternal sequences. The words, “man liveth,” though a simple form of speech, are nevertheless compound in their signification. “Man” is a generic term, and stands for the race ; “liveth” is concrete, and includes man as an individual being, as a member of the community, as a citizen of the country ; and the whole comprehension of the phrase is, that man, considered as an independent personality ; that human society, in its aggregate ; the church, as an ecclesiastical organization ; the State, as a body politic, are all under the same general law of dependence, subjection and obedience, as the condition of life, honor, prosperity, and perpetuity.

We have assembled under very peculiar circumstances. As a people, we are in the midst of revolution. Our secession from the old Federal Union, and the inauguration of a new Confederacy, have not only dissolved the political ties which connected us with the Northern States, but have broken up our religious societies, our benevolent institutions, and thrown us upon new organizations to meet our responsibilities as a Christian people to the world around us. It has seemed to me appropriate, therefore, to waive, in the discussion of the subject chosen, the special views and individual applications which the words would justify and even demand under ordinary circumstances, and to content myself in a brief discourse upon a few leading ideas, as they apply to society and the State.

The chapter opens with the implied doctrine, that the test of true allegiance to God, and the security of a quiet and peaceable life in all

godliness and honesty, is in universal obedience to the divine commandments.

This is a broad, perhaps a startling proposition ; but it is the starting point of all sound and safe reasoning on the question of duty, either personal, social or political. Obedience, to be sincere, must be entire. Neither God's authority nor man's real interests, will allow of any limitation. All religion consists in recognising the law and glory of our Maker—submitting to duty because it is His will, and not because it is a decision of our reason. The authority of the divine statute must be most solemnly regarded ; otherwise, outward conformity is no proof of inward loyalty. To prevent delusion, this thought must be borne in mind, or the sacrifices we make to our own pride and selfishness may assume the name and claim the reward of religious service. While the will of God is absolute and binding, even when the reasons of its enactments do not appear, still to manifest the nature and perfection of His government, He has been pleased to declare the benefit of His laws, and these appeal so strongly to our instincts and our solicitations of interest, as to constrain our admiration and homage, and, under powerful impressions of reverence and fear, we sometimes resolve upon and pledge fidelity and service. But God, who knows the latent propensity of evil in our nature, may often address us as he did the children of Israel, when they vowed to do all that he had commanded. “The people have well said all they have spoken ; O, that there were such an heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments always, that it might be well with them and their children forever !” To prove them, to know what was in their hearts, whether they would keep his commandments or no, He humbled them, suffered them to hunger and thirst, led them through a variety of difficult circumstances, favored them with many miraculous deliverances. They were thwarted and they were indulged, disappointed in their expectations and surprised by their mercies, punished for their sins that they might be admonished, and pardoned that they might be encouraged. But they were slow to learn the lessons of Providence. Distrust, murmuring, ingratitude, disobedience, marked all their history. Failing in the fundamental principle of submission and reference to God, they sought out many inventions. To say nothing now of the evil leaven of pride, self-will, the imitation of the multitude to do evil, which permeated their domestic life and social manners, very soon forgetting all the precautionary counsels of Moses, all the wonders of their own marvellous annals and their peculiar covenant relations, the practical recognition of their invisible King became an abstraction—a tradition without authority and a fable

without a moral. They sought to live by bread alone, to prosper without virtue, to fight without divine warrant, and to conquer without celestial aid. The word of the Lord was buried amid the rubbish of their desecrated temple. The altars, the high places, every green tree, the enthroned abominations of the heathen, revealed a nation of backsliders and idolators, and finally of captives and exiles.

To conserve a nation, that word of the Lord so often announced in the Bible, "THE LORD REIGNETH," must be recognised, acknowledged, practically believed. Incorporated in the Constitution, confessed by the chief magistrate, re-echoed by subordinate rulers, pervading the legislation of the country, presiding over public opinion, it will be a safe-guard in revolution, a guide in peace, a Pharos, beaming light and hope upon the future. Political morality would never have been deemed a thing of no concern, an article of barter, bandied about the market places of the land, if men had not first imagined that the Most High did not regard the actions of men and administer justice among the nations. A perverted public sentiment, largely tinctured with atheism, which excludes God from the affairs of earth, and confines Him, (if it admit His existence at all,) to heaven and heavenly things, is a fruitful source of venality and corruption in high places and low places, of insubordination, of commercial fraud and infidelity to contracts, of impious legislation and wide-spread contamination. Our republican fathers wisely separated the Church from the State ; their degenerate successors madly separated the State from Heaven. It has been the fashion to theorise and decide on politics, as if Christianity were not a superior, supreme law, and as though God had abandoned his book and his rights to the chances of a doubtful contest. Statesmanship has become an earthly science, a philosophy without religion, and a system of expediency without a conscience. In discussing systems of finance, commerce, tariffs, international relations, who insists on moral causes, on the dependence of the nations on Him who turns the seasons round, dispenses the changes and destinies of governments, and cannot, and will not be forgotten, without rebuke and judgment ?

Loose and licentious notions of liberty are the legitimate out-growth of ignoring the supremacy of God. Vicious maxims in trade become current ; capital is invested in enterprises which war against morality ; vice puts on the livery of fashion and becomes bold by patronage ; the administration of justice grows lax, in morbid sympathy with a false philanthropy ; unpunished crime gangrenes society ; and deified wealth rides over principle and merit and talent, and a hollow, heartless selfishness holds carnival over the wreck of every virtue.

The voice of the multitude, the example of the great, the power of money, constitute an inquisition so virulent and overbearing that reproof is dumb ; the testimony of the Church is paralyzed, and, if from the wilderness which popular sin has made, there comes out some fearless prophet of Heaven, threatening the wrath to come, society, demoralised by indulgence and blinded by long impunity, rains upon his honest head the epithets, *bigot, enthusiast, fanatic, hypocrite*, and rushes on unchecked to its doom. Men may philosophise, speculate, declaim, but God *will* reign. He never abdicates or dies. His glory He will not give to another. We are not our own, but men, under authority. *In morals we have no rights of legislation.* We have a Master in heaven. His title to reverence is indisputable ; His claim to homage and obedience inalienable. We *must* render to God the things which are God's. If we would be a Christian nation, what the law commands or allows must never contravene the behests of Heaven. Nations have a sort of collective unity, and between rulers and people there is a reciprocal responsibility, and if there be connivance in evil, each is amenable for the guilt of the other. If the executive, or legislative, or judicial department bring the law or policy of the country into conflict with the revealed economy of God, the people should remonstrate, vindicate the divine right, exhaust the remedies in their power, and, if they cannot reform, at least fix the burden where it belongs. If the people grow corrupt—impious, and claim the natural right to do moral wrong, then the government must set itself to honor God, by becoming a terror to them that do evil. Rulers must not bear the sword in vain, if they would fear God and live by his word.

The Church, too, must cease to shrink before the cant of those godless demagogues, who, when the good seek to array public opinion against vice, and to bring law into harmony with the Bible, preach liberty of conscience, all the more vociferously because they have long since ceased to have any conscience or rule of life, save selfish indulgence. Her testimony against evil must be clear, intrepid, meek but firm, patient but unwearied. The insane cry of popery and priestcraft must no longer smother the thunders of the pulpit ; and the theory of a Christianity which converts people without a change of heart or life—liberal enough to let men do as they please for the sake of their name and their money—which grants indulgences for sin rather than be thought uncharitable, relaxes by an apocryphal canon the stringent, inexorable rules of purity and self-denial, must be met, routed, exiled ; and the sacramental host must know, that if they would drink of the river whose streams make glad the city of God,

then must they fulfil the commission of His lips. The impregnation of government, law, art, commerce, civilization, with her own pure, gentle, peaceable, loving sentiments, is the predicted triumph of Christianity : and we approximate the glory of that millennial age, when we honor the divine word by believing its promises, fearing its threatenings, adopting its counsels, practising its morals ; when we magnify the Lord and exalt His name : when we recognise His providence, beseech His aid, deprecate His wrath, by confession, petition and reformation. I am glad that our young Republic acknowledges God in her Constitution, and calls on Him to witness the rectitude of her aims and objects. I am glad that our President, in several official acts, " seeing that we have no might against the great multitude coming upon us," has sought to turn the eyes of the people to the Lord their God ; and that, in his late inaugural, he concludes with an earnest appeal to God, and a thrilling declaration of his own abiding trust in the justice and mercy of the Lord Almighty. I am glad that the people have responded again and again to the call to fast and pray with unwonted earnestness and universality. Amid much that is discouraging to the pious, in view of abounding iniquity, these national acts, interpreted by Scriptural examples, inspire hope that God will vouchsafe to the intercessions of the faithful few our deliverance and liberty. O, my countrymen, let us reverence the Lord of Sabaoth, and let us remember that our country is to be preserved and perpetuated, not by science, wealth, patriotism, population, armies or navies, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord. " Hear me, Asa and all Judah and Benjamin : the Lord is with you while ye be with Him, and if ye seek Him, He will be found of you ; but if ye forsake Him, He will forsake you."

Another word of the Lord, by which society is to be improved and the nation exalted to healthy, happy life, is His statute on the religious training of the young. On this subject, for a series of years, the policy of the country has been wrong and growing worse. The testimony of the Church has been timid, wavering and inconsistent. In relation to it, the commandment of the Lord is explicit. The admonitions and counsels of the Bible are frequent, earnest and pointed, but a proud and petulant philosophy, full of conceit and flippant maxims, has corrupted both opinion and practice, and circulated ideas full of deadly poison, blighting to character and fatal to all government. The primal cause of well nigh all the evils which afflict society, is to be found in defective family discipline, example and instruction, and in a nearly total disregard of the injunctions of the Bible, the word of the Lord upon this subject. To train up a child in the nurture and admonition

of the Lord, is a lofty commission, a moral duty of the highest grade, next in responsibility to our personal salvation. To fulfil it in perfection, requires the highest order of intellect and the deepest work of grace. According to the capacity given, or that might be acquired, every parent is bound by the most solemn considerations, both personal and relative, temporal and eternal, to do what he can in developing the immortal mind committed to his charge into the highest style of character. Admitting the intrinsic difficulties of the task, I can not forbear remarking, that the embarrassments most complained of chiefly arise from substituting the Divine by human plans—the sternness of authority, arbitrary, imperious and passionate ; turbulent temper, venting themselves in petulance and scolding ; an indiscriminate use of the rod, or the bribery of weak compliances or irredeemable and unredeemed promises, or the postponement of all effort till the day of salvation is gone ; and all these in the face of God’s word, which says : “Fathers, provoke not your children to wrath ;” “forbear threatening ;” “put away lying ;” “be not hasty in thy spirit to be angry ;” “he that loveth his son chasteneth him betimes.” The Bible not only gives specific instruction in all these things, but is itself the best instrument of discipline. Its doctrines are to be taught, its principles explained, its motives urged, its promises applied, its threatenings announced. “And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thy house and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.” For, says the Psalmist, God “established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers, that they should make them known to their children : that the generation to come might know them, even the children which should be born : who should arise and declare them to their children : that they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments.” How wise, how benignant, how conservative this statute ! A father dies without a will : the division of his estate is settled by the arbitrament of law ; but if he failed to communicate the knowledge of God, who shall supply his omission, or make up to the wronged or defrauded child his lost heritage ? How natural and beautiful the Divine plan for transmitting truth ! Every parent a historian and preacher ; every habitation a temple ; every path a school-house ; every bed a pious retreat, where age sinks to rest with the language of piety on its lips, and youth is hushed to repose by the music of love in the words of heaven. Oh ! if the people would live by every word that proceedeth from the mouth of God, what families ! how happy ; what children ! how lovely ; what churches !

how pure ; what a nation ! how great, and wise, and strong, having God so nigh in all that we call upon Him for.

What a departure from the word of the Lord must that be, which has accredited people with religion—*Bible religion*—and yet allowed them to live in the neglect of a primary duty, integral to personal piety, essential to Church progress, fundamental to public order and national greatness ! Verily, the bread which we have been using may continue breath and being, but it is scanty, husky fare, and will fill the land with moral skeletons, tattered, hungry prodigals, too feeble to stand in virtue's ways, and too far off to return to our Father's house. If we would have our sons as plants, grown up in their youth ; our daughters as corner stones, polished after the similitude of a palace ; if we would enjoy the fatness, the sweetness, the wine of life, we must live by every word of God. We must come back to the law and to the testimony, and renouncing and denouncing all the pert infidel sayings of the times, all the cant of irresolution, the pleas of sloth, the pretences of a mock humility, set ourselves to realize that prophetic scene, bright with celestial promise—"and all thy children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy children."

It is due to the subject, and appropriate to the occasion, to say that the whole education of the country should be Christian. During the formative period of life, it is obviously the will of God, and to the interest of society, that the rising generation should be taught the knowledge of God, the mind developed in the light of the Bible, and the heart guarded from the contagion of bad example, and trained under a system decidedly evangelical. Science and religion should be united in indissoluble wedlock. The sanctities of the parental roof and the memories of pious instruction, should be perpetuated in the schoolhouse, the academy, the college. The interests at stake are too precious to be jeopardized by any omissions, or lapses, or intervals of neglect. The infidel policy of leaving the youthful mind unbiassed and free, is unsound in principle and impracticable in fact. It is a stratagem of the enemy of souls, too shallow to deceive a thinking man, and ought to spring the good to an instant occupancy of the ground, and a tenacious holding of it, by all the arts of love and mercy, the most assiduous pains-taking care, and the most devout supplications to God for needed help. The Christian denominations of the land have been seeking to do somewhat in this direction ; but they have largely modified their plans, to forestall the charge of sectarianism, and escape the apprehended edge of reproach from their enemies. What ! is it sectarian to teach a youth to fear God, to do

right, to love the country ! Sectarian, to urge patriotism, benevolence, personal purity, by the sanctions of revealed religion ! My brethren, if we would live by the word of the Lord, we must no longer compromise our duty to God and the country, by diluting our systems of education to suit carnal taste and worldly wisdom. We must prepare for the future. The conflict for dominion between light and darkness is progressing—the crisis is at hand. We must come up to the help of the Lord against the mighty. The young should be enlisted as conscripts of the Kingdom. Catechisms, Sunday schools, family religion, pastoral care, religious education, should all be levied upon, pressed into service, if we would save the landmarks of morality from the inundations of vice, and draw over the nation the shield of Omnipotence. Put the Bible in every house, an evangelical teacher in every school, a man of God in every pulpit—stir up, vitalize, intensify every agency for good in the Church ; multiply by faith and prayer revivals of religion ; seek, O seek, the instruction and conversion of the young ; and then, when this terrible war is ended and peace reigns in all our borders, we shall have a state of society so bright, beautiful and blest, that time shall have no emblem of it in the past but Eden, and eternity no type in the future but heaven.

This history of the past, as well as the suggestions of the text, constrain me to add one more illustration of the general truth I have been expounding. The life of a nation, in the sense of stability, honor, credit, prosperity, depends largely upon the moral character of its rulers. Nor are these results regulated by merely natural causes. History, sacred and profane, attests that God's blessing is upon the good, and His curse sooner or later upon the bad. In the political creed of this country, a man's morals, his relations to God, have scarcely been thought of in his elevation to office. Party, party-service, order in rotation, have often determined the candidate, and, albeit he was the victim of notorious vices, the wire-worker reckoned advisedly upon rallying the strength of the party to his support, through his affinity with the vile on the one hand, and the unscrupulous devotion of all the rest to the platform, on the other. We are the victims to-day of this ungodly traffic in vice, of unscriptural theories of government, of selfish schemes of power, of the fanatical ambition to enthrone an idea born in the seething brain of a pseudo-philanthropy, which boldly avows that the Bible is a lie if it does not teach its creed, and God to be rejected if He does not endorse it.

The word of the Lord is, "provide out of all the people able men that fear God." "The wicked walk on every side, when the vilest men are exalted." "When the wicked beareth rule, the people

mourn." On the other side, a ruler "is a minister of God for good"—"a terror to evil doers, and a praise to them that do well." "Righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people," especially when sin is exalted, honored, enthroned in the high places of the land. In the divine administration, rulers are contemplated as the head and representatives of the people, even in hereditary governments; and it must be eminently so in an elective one. It is to be remembered, therefore, that the people must share in the judgments which the sins of rulers provoke. When these proud transgressors challenge the Divine Being by their reckless impiety, the retribution is often sudden and overwhelming, as when He smote Herod with worms; or a gradual blight, a living death, as in the days of Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin. One mode of divine punishment, (and perhaps the most to be dreaded,) is to abandon a people to corruption, leave the disease to work its course without check, permit them to fill up the cup of their iniquity, and, when sin puts on the glare of renown and the robes of office, and dances in festal gaiety under the patronage of the great—when the floodgates are open, the impediments are gone, and pollution rolls like a flood—then, the clouds of wrath brew in the heavens above, and the Dead sea makes ready her grave beneath. Another mode is, to make the people mourn their folly, through the passions of their rulers, and then come wars, taxes, oppression, waste of blood and treasure; or the clouds of heaven are sealed and the parched earth responds not to the tiller's toil: mildew blights the ungathered harvest, pestilence wastes population, or the red rain of battle drenches the land with sorrow, and captivity is the doom of the nation. We are beginning a new career. God help us to avoid the errors of the past, and, throwing off the shackles of parties, conventions and platforms, to abide by the word of the Lord. Let us have a Christian nation in fact as well as in name, that God may be as a wall of fire round about this young Confederacy, and a glory in the midst of her.

There is one other departure from the word of the Lord, common to the policy of the country, adopted and pursued by well nigh all, which demands and deserves rebuke. I mean the greed of gain, the deification of money. The subject is too large for discussion now, but a word to the wise will not be amiss.

In this very chapter, Moses admonished the people against the self-same evil into which we have sadly run, and notifies them that the only security against the temptations of an all-surrounding abundance, was to remember, fear and obey God. "Beware, lest when thou hast eaten and art full, and hast built goodly houses and dwelt therein;

and when thy herds and thy flocks multiply, and thy silver and gold is multiplied, and all that thou hast is multiplied; then thine heart be lifted up, and thou forget the Lord thy God." Alas! this is the crime and the curse of America. We have prospered, grown rich, luxurious, proud, and have said in our hearts, "my power and the might of my hand hath gotten me this wealth."

The history of the world confirms the testimony of the Bible as to the moral dangers of accumulated treasure. Wealth is favorable to every species of wickedness. Luxury, licentiousness of manners, selfishness, indifference to the distresses of others, presumptuous confidence in our own resources—these are the accompaniments of affluence, whenever the safe-guards of the Divine word, both as to the mode of increase and the proper use, are disregarded. As to the higher forms of character and civilization, unless regulated and sanctified by Scripture truth and principle, *opulence* has always been one of the most active causes of individual degeneracy and of national corruption. Under the influence of its subtle poison, moral principle decays; Patriotism puts off its nobility and works for hire; Bribery corrupts the judgment seat, and Justice is blinded by gifts; Benevolence suppresses its generous impulses, and counts its contributions by fractions; Religion, forgetting the example of its Author and the charity of its mission, pleads penury, and chafes at every opportunity for work or distribution; Covetousness devours widows' houses and grows sleek on the bread of orphans; Usury speculates on providence and claims its premium, alike from suffering poverty and selfish extravagance; Extortion riots upon the surplus of the rich and the scrapings of the poor, enlarges its demand as necessity increases, and, amid impoverishment, want and public distress, whets its appetite for keener rapine and with unsated desire, laps the last drop from its victim and remorselessly sighs for more. The world counts gain as godliness, prosperity as virtue, fraud as talent; and *money*, MONEY, MONEY, is the god of the land, with every house for a temple, every field for an altar, and every man for a worshipper. The Church, infected by popular example, adopts the maxims of men, grades the wages of her servants by the minimum standard, pays slowly and gives grudgingly, and stands guard over her treasures, as if Providence were a robber, and they who press the claims of Heaven came to cheat and to steal.

Whenever the conservative laws of accumulation and distribution, as prescribed in the Bible, are ignored, then not only does the love of money stimulate our native depravity, but the hoarded gain furnishes facilities for uncommon wickedness. The attendant evils are uniform. They have never failed in the history of the past. When

commerce, manufactures and agriculture pour in their treasures, then, without the counteracting power of Scripture truth and Gospel grace, they infallibly breed the sins which have been, under God, the executors of nations. Such is the suicidal tendency of unsanctified wealth, that the greater the prosperity of a people the shorter the duration. The virulence of the maladies superinduced destroy suddenly, and that without remedy. Now mark how apposite, how prophetic, how descriptive, the word of the Lord : “ *They that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts.*” “ He that *maketh haste* to be rich shall not be innocent.” “ He that *hasteth* to be rich hath an evil eye.” How these passages rebuke the spirit of speculation, the greedy desires, the equivocal expedients, the high-pressure schemes of the people ! “ Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth.” “ Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded nor trust in uncertain riches.” O, ye who make, and save, and hide, and hoard, hear ye the word of the Lord : “ Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten ; your gold and silver is cankered, and the *rust* of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire.” O, ye who strut and shine in plumage plucked from the poor and needy, “ ye have received your consolation ;” “ weep and howl for the miseries that shall come upon you.”

One of the moral secrets of this *wretched* war, as we *call* it, (perhaps it may turn out to be *merciful*,) in my judgment, is, to arrest the corruption of prosperity—to unsettle, agitate, break loose the people from their plans and hopes—dethrone their *cotton idol*, and, by upheaving the incrustations imposed by long years of peace and security, to let into our darkened minds the light of truth and ventilate the dormant conscience. Infatuated by the love of the world, sensualized, fast-rooted in our pride and forgetfulness of God, the Spirit of grace has been shut out, the hearts of men were impervious, through the power of dominant, over-mastering habit, and the preaching of the Gospel as fruitless as would have been the tinkling of a cymbal. The Church has been sliding into the world : the broad Scriptural lines of demarkation were well nigh passed. Piety had grown thin, meagre, unreal. Christian manhood was merged in a mawkish spirit of compliance—a supple, sickly liberality, ready to break down the last barrier to the encroachments of fashion and the demands of an ungodly age. We needed reform. The shocks and vibrations of war’s terrible batteries were necessary to shake the drowsy, stagnant atmosphere, to change the currents of thought, to break down the dominion of old ideas, and set us free from the selfish

policy of the past. To this end, God has "stirred up our nest," pushed us out from our resting places, unhinged the whole machinery of life, and called us to privation, sacrifice and peril. Oh, that this bitter discipline, this fiery ordeal, may prepare us for a liberty, better regulated, and a religion more spiritual, active and useful.

Hear now "the conclusion of the whole matter." The sum of this teaching is, that man liveth not by bread only, not by natural means, not by human philosophy, not by expediency, by time-serving—the shifting policy of earth; but, that, if we would be good, prosperous, useful, happy, safe, we must live by every word of God. My brethren, we are not mere life-time creatures, born to graze over the world like the beasts of the field, or to flit about in gaiety and song like the birds of the air; but subjects of discipline, spirits on probation, where great deeds are to be done, heroic sacrifices to be made, the distresses of others to be relieved, and our generation to be served by the will of God. The earth we inhabit is not a mere physical frame-work, but a theatre of religion, of devotion to Christ and service to man. Breath, digestion, growth, sumptuous fare, titles, names, rank, power—these are not life, but semblances, mockeries, all. No, no; life is a boon of grace, the gift of God, capable of high achievement and noble destiny. To save our souls and to serve our race—this is our task; and to fulfil it is "life and health and peace." Love to God and man is our highest dignity, the divinest charity, the surest preparation for duty and death. While the wise, and rich, and mighty glory in their possessions, let us give all for "the pearl of great price." While the wavering minds of an unbelieving world toss restlessly upon a sea of doubt, let us hold fast by the oracles of God, the sure word of prophecy and promise. Precious Bible! Here is treasure which never waxes old. Here is knowledge without decay, truth which endureth forever. From it, comes all pure morality; out of it, proceeds all the sweet charities of life. In it, is the motive power that is now reforming, and by and by will achieve the reformation of our race. The old man, leaning upon his staff and tottering to the tomb, reads it and thanks God he was born to die. The gray-haired matron soothes her sorrows by its record of love, and the light of her hope, kindled by its inspiration, projects beyond the desolations of death. Childhood and youth pillow their heads upon its truth in nature's last struggle, and die with their fingers between its promise-freighted leaves. In the house of mourning, its footstep is noiseless as an angel's wing, and its power to cheer more potent than an angel's tongue. At the grave of the buried, it chants the hymn of hope, preaches the patience of faith to mourning friendship and stricken

love, exhales and crystalizes the tears of sorrow, and gems the crown of life with these transfigured mementos of earthly suffering.

To devise a plan for giving this Book of books to the world, is the object of our meeting. Under present circumstances we can do but little. Our country is in trouble. War is upon us. We can, however, consult and pray, renew our expression of faith and love, strengthen the bonds of unity, and make ready for the future. It is a time for preparation. Let us provide a treasury for the gifts of the Lord's people, organize for effective action when peace shall come, give the New Testament at least to our soldiers, and show to the Churches and the world that we covet the eulogy pronounced by our Lord upon Mary, when he said, "she hath done what she could." Let us declare our will and purpose to co-operate with the other associations of Christendom in the work of printing, publishing and circulating the sacred Scriptures without note or comment; and may God speed the holy work and hasten the day when the Bible shall be the creed of every people, the text-book of every statesman, the constitution of every nation, the joy and excellency of all the earth.

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